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Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 027413

FOLLOWING REPEAT THE HAGUE 438 ACTION SECSTATE
INFO BONN BRASILIA BRUSSELS LONDON VIENNA 27 JAN 78

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 0438

USEEC

USIAEA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, PARM, TECH, NL
SUBJ: ALMELO ENLARGEMENT AND URENCO FUEL SUPPLY TO BRAZIL

REF: THE HAGUE 311

1. SUMMARY: ALL-DAY DEBATE IN SECOND CHAMBER ON THE TWIN ISSUES OF THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE ALMELO CENTRIFUGE PLANT AND THE BRAZILIAN ENRICHMENT CONTRACT GAVE NEW GON GOVERNMENT A CHANCE TO CUT ITS TEETH ON WHAT IS CURRENTLY THE HOTTEST POLITICAL ISSUE IN THE HAGUE. DEBATE WILL BE RESUMED TUESDAY, JANUARY 31. THOUGH THE ISSUE IS COMPLEX AND INVOLVES CROSSCUTTING
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CONSIDERATIONS, MAJORITY SENTIMENT SEEMS IN FAVOR OF HAVING GON SEEK FURTHER SAFEGUARDS AGAINST POSSIBLE MISUSE OF PLUTONIUM BY BRAZIL. END SUMMARY

2. THE GOVERNMENT'S CASE WAS HANDLED BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (VAN DER KLAAUW) AND THE ECONOMIC AFFAIRS MINISTER (VAN AARDEENE). THE LATTER, ON TOP OF HIS BRIEF, MADE

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DETAILED AND STRONG CASE FOR PROCEEDING BOTH WITH THE ENLARGEMENT
AND WITH THE ENRICHMENT CONTRACT ON ECONOMIC GROUNDS. VAN DER
KLAAUW, ALSO IN HIS MAIDEN POLITICAL APPEARANCE, DEFENDED GON
DECISION TO PROCEED AS BEST AS POSSIBLE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCE,
THOUGH IN DOING SO HE SEEMED CONSIDERABLE LESS SURE
OF HIMSELF THAN HIS COLLEAGUE. THE OPPOSITION SOCIALIST PARTY,
AS WELL AS THE SMALL D'66 AND RADICAL PARTIES, HEAVILY CRI-
TICIZED THE GOVERNMENT, USING A VARIETY OF ARGUMENTS: INADEQUATE
CONSULTATION WITH THE PARLIAMENT, LOSS OF NERVE IN
THE FACE OF AN ILLUSORY DEADLINE, LACK OF DRIVE IN IMPRESSING
DUTCH NON-PROLIFERATION CONCERNS ON ITS CONSORTIUM PARTNERS,
AND INADEQUATE PERSISTENCE IN SECURING PROPER SAFEGUARDS.
OF THE TWO PARTIES SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT, THE LIBERAL
PARTY (VVD) EXPRESSED QUALIFIED ENDORSEMENT, BUT SPOKESMAN
FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS INDICATED THEY
FELT SHORTCHANGED. D'66, IN PARTICULAR, STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE
OF DUTCH AND US NON-PROLIFERATION POLICIES REMAINING IN HARMONY.
VAN DER KLAAUW RESPONDED THAT THIS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE THE CASE.

3. THE DEBATE WILL CONTINUE JANUARY 31. NONE OF THE PARTIES
HAS AS YET TABLED ANY MOTIONS. IT CONTINUES TO LOOK AS THOUGH
THE GOVERNMENT WILL CARRY THE DAY, BUT THE CHAMBER MAY
INSIST THAT THE GON MAKE ANOTHER TRY AT BETTER SAFEGUARDS
FOR THE BRAZILIAN CONTRACT.
MCCLOSKEY
UNQUOTE VANCE".
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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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